



U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary

F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., Chairman

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News Advisory

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Contact: Jeff Lungren/Terry Shawn
202-225-2492

Voting Rights Act Hearings Wednesday on Judicial Evolution of the Retrogression Standard and Bilingual Ballots

What: Oversight Hearing entitled, "The Voting Rights Act: Section 5 – The Judicial Evolution of the Retrogression Standard," followed by "The Voting Rights Act: Section 203 – Bilingual Election Requirements, Part II"

Who: Subcommittee on the Constitution – Rep. Steve Chabot (R-Ohio), Chairman

When: Wednesday, November 9, 2005 – 2:00 p.m., followed by 4:00 p.m.

Where: 2141 Rayburn Building

The House Judiciary Committee is conducting an extensive evaluation of the landmark Voting Rights Act, which contains many provisions due to expire in 2007 unless Congress extends them. Wednesday's hearings will focus on the retrogression standard under Section 5 as well as Section 203's bilingual election requirements.

BACKGROUND...

- ✓ Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act requires covered jurisdictions to ensure that changes to election or voting practices "do not have the purpose or effect of denying or abridging a citizen's right to vote because of color, race, or language minority status," before giving effect to such a change.
- ✓ To date, counties and townships in 30 different states are covered by Section 203. These covered jurisdictions are required to provide voting materials such as notices, forms, instructions, ballots, and other materials in a covered language in addition to English.

THESE HEARINGS WILL...

- ⇒ Examine the impact of *Georgia v. Ashcroft* on minorities' ability to elect candidates of their choice, whether influence districts further minority interests, and how minority backsliding will be prevented in the future under Section 5.
- ⇒ Examine the continuing need for Section 203.

WITNESSES: 2:00 p.m. – Mr. Theodore Shaw, Director-Counsel and President, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund; **Ms. Anne Lewis**, Attorney, Strickland Brockington Lewis LLP; **Hon. Tyrone L. Brooks, Sr.**, Member of the GA General Assembly and Pres., GA Association of Black Elected Officials; **Mr. Laughlin McDonald**, Director, ACLU Voting Rights Project. **4:00 p.m. – Ms. Jacqueline Johnson**, Executive Director, National Congress of American Indians; **Mr. K.C. McAlpin**, Executive Director, ProEnglish; **Mr. James Tucker**, Attorney, Ogletree Deakins, P.C.; and **Mr. Juan Cartagena**, General Counsel, Community Service Society.

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